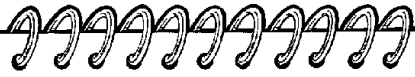


ALCOVA HEIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Alcova Heights Neighborhood, Arlington, Virginia

January 2017



NEIGHBORHOOD NOTES

Neighborhood meetings are planned for the **third Thursday** of February (the 16th), May, September, and November.

Volunteers are needed for our annual events including the park cleanup, the block party and the Halloween parade. Sara Uzel will be the volunteer coordinator if you're interested in helping out.

The listserve will be moving to Google Groups for greater security this spring, but the Yahoo Group archive will continue to exist. Koset Surakomol will be handling the switchover.

Pet of the Month: Keynes

Keynes of South Lincoln Street, a member of the Saltiel family, (along with David, Rebecca and Oliver) is our pet of the month. He's "a strong front runner for the neighborhood's laziest dog, seems unlikely to lead a revolution in economic thought like his namesake, but is always pleased to greet passersby - especially if they have food in their pockets," says David.



AHCA November 2016 Election and Meeting Recap

by Mike Rhode

The neighborhood meeting saw a light turnout to elect the officers for the coming terms. By unanimous acclamation, the following people were elected:

President - Lander Allen

Vice President - Koset Surakomol

Secretary - Laura Cooke (incumbent)

Treasurer - Karen Osterloh (incumbent)

2-year delegate - Sara Uzel

2-year delegate - Jonathan Barker

1-year delegate - Marco Delucca

Lois Koontz volunteered to continue in her role as Civic Association representative. Three other positions alongside Lois' are empty. A vote of thanks was raised for departing President **Kelly Holly**, and VP **Mark Cole**. **Mike Rhode** and **Susi Lill** have volunteered to be the newsletter editors.

A discussion of the listserve led to a vote to retain the status quo of no advertising, residents-only (with exceptions made case-by-case by moderators Mike and Koset). The suggestion of Nextdoor (<https://nextdoor.com/>) was raised from the floor, and was taken under advisement by the executive board. (In January, a decision was made not to use the service due to its extensive reach into all of Arlington, not just AH, as well as its requests for private information of users). A discussion of recognizing business donors to the neighborhood will be continued by the executive board.

County Will Not Consider APC Lot for a Park

by Mike Rhode

Concerned neighbors met with Christian Dorsey of the County Board in November to ask about options for keeping existing green space behind the Arlington Presbyterian Church. A letter and petition drafted by Tini Dinh, and signed by many neighbors, asked, "As you are aware, the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) will be demolishing the Arlington Presbyterian Church to build a new multifamily building, with an adjacent residential lot to be sold to help finance the project. We strongly encourage the County to purchase this entire residential lot, to be converted to green space that could benefit the Columbia Pike and Alcova Heights communities and beyond."

The county board quickly responded, stating, "The Department of Parks and Recreation staff looked into purchasing the parcels near South Lincoln and 9th Streets behind the APAH property and recommended against doing so. This recommendation was based on the small size of the site which limits recreational opportunities, inability for expansion in the foreseeable future, and lack of a planning precedent. The County Board accepted the staff recommendation at a recent closed work session. We do, of course, appreciate that a small park would be welcomed by neighbors. However, the County has limited land acquisition funds and many competing interests."

School News

by Maura McMahon and Lois Koontz

Dr. Judith Concha has been appointed as the new assistant principal of Barcroft Elementary as of January 9th. Dr. Concha earned her Ph.D. from Wake Forest University and a M.Ed. from George Mason University.



Dr. Judith Concha

She comes to Barcroft from her position as Assistant Principal at Discovery Elementary. Ms. Tawanna Taylor (formerly Ms. Betts) has been nominated as Barcroft Teacher of the Year. Ms. Anette Levano is Barcroft's nomination for Support Staff of the year.

The School Board recently made an adjustment to the high school attendance zones in an effort to balance enrollment across the three comprehensive high schools. Enrollment at Washington-Lee HS has continued to grow in recent years, resulting in significant overcrowding. Wakefield HS remains the designated high school for Alcov Heights.

In the upcoming months, the School Board will be considering options for an additional 1300 high school seats planned for 2022. The Board will be considering both where to build and what instructional program or focus to offer. You can attend a joint work session of the Facilities Advisory and Advisory Council on Instruction on Wednesday, February 15th at 7pm. Final board action is projected for next fall, but the process will be well underway soon

if you want to have input. More information is at the APS website: www.apsva.us.

Middle school boundaries will also be revised in preparation for the opening of a new middle school at the Stratford site when the HB Woodlawn program moves to its new home near Rosslyn in 2019. Elementary school boundaries in south Arlington will be revised to fill the more than 400 seats vacated by the Montessori program at Drew Model school when the new elementary school for the Patrick Henry community opens next to Jefferson Middle School. The Montessori program itself will move from Drew to the current Patrick Henry building at the Career Center. A visioning process is now underway for the instructional focus to be implemented at Drew Model as the neighborhood program gets ready to welcome students redistricted to Drew in 2019.

The School Board will be revising its policies regarding admissions and transfer for all schools this spring. An initial work session took place January 9th. Voluntary transfers will play an increasing role in allowing families to choose less-crowded schools. This has already been instituted at the high school and middle school levels. Transfers could also include set-asides or preferences allowing for intentional balancing of poverty levels among students. School geographic preferences could be severely limited to small walk zones while creating equal opportunity lotteries. These lotteries may also include set-asides for Spanish-dominant children in the case of immersion or high or low-poverty families in all cases.

ABOVE AND BEYOND: Neighbors Who Deliver the Newsletter to You

by Marie Van Ness

In every neighborhood there are people who go "above and beyond" to get things done for the community. Rhea and Steve Dola of 6th St. have been those "above and beyond" kind of neighbors for a long time.

They have recently stepped down from a long-time commitment to get our newsletter delivered to you. For years, they would pick the newsletter up from the printer, return to their house and count out issues for the 23 routes, and then drive around Alcov Heights dropping the papers at the doorsteps of the designated deliverers. There was always a personal note from Rhea clipped to the batch of newsletters.

So a BIG and heartfelt thanks to Rhea and Steve for all your effort and hard work donated to Alcov Heights. In addition to the Dolas, there is a group of volunteer neighbors who have been delivering the newsletter to your

doorstep for a number of years, through all kinds of challenges: weather, short deadlines and some steep steps. The newsletter wouldn't appear without them and we thank them for their commitment. Here are their names:



Marie Abarca	Amy Fisher	Peter Neubauer
Jenny Anderson	Martha Gibbons	Terri Shapiro
Tiera Bonneford	Paula Green	Karen Osterloh
Carol Clark	Daniel Hanson	and Eric Sorsen
Bill Cogswell	(began Oct '16)	Elaine Stewart
Matt Connors	Barry Isaac	Marie Van Ness
Diane Duza	Aaron	Karl Veit
Scott and Leslie	Lowenberger	Mitzi and Bob
Fearing	Maura McMahon	Williams

Operation Turbo: A Neighborhood Charity

by Dyan Z. Smith

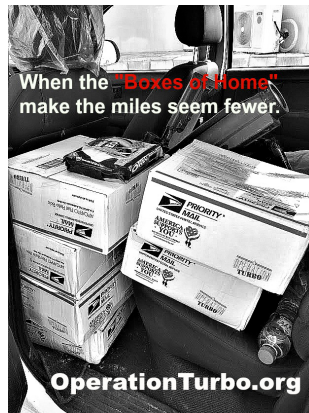
My husband Jeffrey and I began Operation Turbo in November of 2010 after we visited our niece Heather, a U.S. Navy engineer responsible for the gas turbine engines of the USS Stout. Heather shared that many of her shipmates do not have support or receive personal mail while they are deployed. Upon learning this, my heart sunk and we immediately took action. OT was born that day. We collected 350 notes of gratitude from friends, family, neighbors and clients and each person on that ship received one along with some goodies that people donated.

Since Heather was going to be responsible for passing out everything we sent, and was the reason we started this program in the first place, we decided to name it after her nickname on the ship – her peers fondly refer to her as Turbo.

After this first shipment, we supported a Marine unit in Afghanistan whose deployment was extended past the holidays in 2012. We were filling a niche that needed to be filled – and quickly grew to ship boxes to the Army and Air Force. As the program continued to grow, friends suggested we become a non-profit. In mid-2014 we did just that, and are proud to be a registered 501(c)(3).

What do we send in these boxes? The two most requested item we receive are for protein, and good, strong, coffee. We take into consideration whether we are shipping to males or females, and whether they are on a ship or have boots on the ground. Climate is also a factor. This is one way we differ from other organizations that do this sort of thing. We also put a blank journal in every box we send.

The “thank yous” we receive from overseas are all the evidence we need that we are making a difference. We started this program with the hope of supporting a few sailors, and had no idea what it would become. Operation Turbo is 100% volunteer based. To date we have sent thousands of ‘Boxes of Home’. In 2016 alone we sent 732 and we don’t see it slowing down. We’ve sent more boxes each year, and are in need of support by businesses and individuals. You can learn more about our program and donate money or items on our web site at <http://www.operationturbo.org/>.



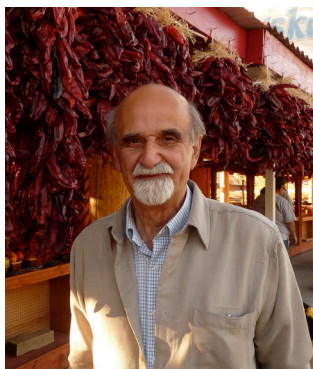
Recap of 2015 and 2016 & Proposed Budget for 2017

	2015	2016	Proposed 2017
REVENUE			
Dues	\$ 860.00	\$1,429.00	\$1,150.00
Ad Revenue	150.00	150.00	1,000.00
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$1,010.00</u>	<u>\$1,579.00</u>	<u>\$2,150.00</u>
EXPENSES			
Block Party	\$ 656.24	\$399.60	\$550.00
Park Clean Up	34.69	0	50.00
Halloween Party	338.61	\$259.86	300.00
Newsletter	0	0	1,000.00
Purchase of signs	0	0	250.00
AC Civic Federation	50.00	50.00	50.00
CPRO	0	0	50.00
Website	0	0	35.00
PayPal fees	3.72	15.22	10.00
Misc. exp.			100.00
TOTAL	<u>\$1,083.26</u>	<u>\$724.68</u>	<u>\$2,395.00</u>

A Neighbor Profile:

Jamshid Kooros, Architect & Mapmaker

Jamshid Kooros' wife, Barbara Pickett, says of him, "An architect by training (who worked for Walter Gropius and Hugh Newell Jacobson), he now draws pictorial maps of cities and gardens." The couple lives on the curve at the end of South 7th St. His website is <http://koorosmaps.com/>.



How long have you lived in Alcov Heights?

While we bought the house in the early '90s because we liked the diversity of the neighborhood and had family in the area, we left for several years while my wife worked for Peace Corps in East Africa. After returning in the late 90s, we added a second story to our 1939 Art Deco home.

Did you practice architecture while living here?

I've done a few architectural projects, mainly for friends... a kitchen in Manhattan and several projects in Mount Pleasant. My real work these days is drawing pictorial maps of gardens and cities, to include The National Mall, Arlington Cemetery and Williamsburg.

Why did you start making maps? Are they all drawn and colored by hand?

Initially when I moved to DC, I worked for Hugh Newell Jacobsen in Georgetown; during that time, I would frequent the Smithsonian museums and National Gallery of Art and was struck by the fact that there was not an attractive and easy to understand map of the Mall, museums and monuments. I drew one, showed it to the buyer at the Smithsonian shops who agreed to give it a try and, now, nearly 20 years later, my map of the Mall still sells at the Smithsonian and National Park Service shops.

All my maps are hand-drawn with pen and ink, then colored by hand. I think that is what people find attractive and a bit quirky about my work and I always put myself in my drawings. You can find me mowing the grass on my Mall map. The text on the back side is largely formatted on a computer.

Do you have any projects underway now?

I just finished a map of Philadelphia and recently revised my map of the Mall to include the Museum of African-American Art and Culture. I am also re-issuing my Williamsburg map. Farther afield, I am working on a map of the chateaux of the Loire, a UNESCO site and yet farther afield, perhaps a map of Luang Prabang in Laos, a UNESCO site which we recently visited.

What's your favorite thing about living in the area?

Having spent many years in Boston, it is a relief to have a winter that doesn't seem to last forever as one can get out and walk. At the same time, we are so close to the city. I like the diversity and hope the planned Harris-Teeter project doesn't change the character of the neighborhood. And I am still sorry that the Columbia Pike trolley project was cancelled.

Nominate your neighbor for a profile in the next issue by emailing the editor; Mike Rhode, at mrhode@gmail.com.

Letter to the Editor

We need your help! Grass-roots efforts are underway to engage GSA on the proposed expansion of the NFATC site, which proposes to eliminate the existing paved path between S. George Mason and S. Quincy. Neighbors are organizing to urge GSA to permanently protect the current path, and to dedicate land for the construction of a continuous bike/ped path along the entire southern fenceline of the NFATC site, connecting S. George Mason to S. Oakland at S. 3rd Street.

To learn more, and to sign the petition, see: <http://tinyurl.com/j4o2nuy>.

Danielle Arigoni

Announcements & Milestones

Alan Arnold, his wife **Adriane** and their two children have moved into Dundree Knolls from China, as Alan was offered a fellowship at the National Science Foundation. **Jim Pritchett** has returned to the neighborhood and is renting on South 7th. **Barbara Vance Cogswell** (an original lass of 7th St.) and **Bill Cogswell** will commemorate their 58th wedding anniversary on January 31st. **Mike and Maura McMahon** celebrated their 15th anniversary last October. Big sister **Laura Beth, Megan**, and **John Koerner** of 7th St. welcomed **Alison Grace** and **Nolan Hayes** on January 6, 2017. **Maria A. Peake** of South Quincy passed away on April 30, 2016 at 91 and is survived by her husband **Robert Lee Peake**.

A Neighbor Profile: Arlington Baptist Church

by Pastor Mike Law

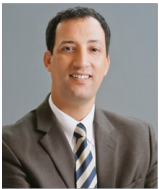
Arlington is, if nothing else, transient. From the neighbors who change every few years to the new high rises and restaurants recently cropping up along Columbia Pike, one of the things you can count on to remain the same in Arlington is its changing nature. Alcovia Heights, while not immune to such change, has been home to Arlington Baptist Church since its inception in 1927.

The first organizational meeting took place on November 6, 1927, in the overseer's residence of the Byars' house. The neighbor across the street, J.C. Hanley, ran an electric cord across Marconi Avenue (now 8th Street) so that the meeting could have lights. From the church's first official service, which was held on February 19, 1928, the church continued to meet in the overseer's residence. In August of 1928, the church began holding services on the site of their new property on Virginia Street (now Monroe Street). Arlington Baptist was established to worship God and serve him as ambassadors of Jesus Christ. For almost ninety years, God has allowed our church to carry on this mission in Alcovia Heights.

Over the last couple of years, God has seen fit to join new families to our church. As the church has grown, so has our desire to serve by being good neighbors to the

community at large. We improved the church exterior in an effort to be a welcoming presence in the neighborhood. We appreciate your patience with us as we park along the streets on Sunday mornings. We are currently exploring expanding our parking. About a year ago, we were able to purchase the property directly adjacent to our parking lot, and we are in conversation with the County about how we might best utilize that space.

Each Sunday we invite everyone gathered to turn from their sin and place their faith in the risen Savior. If you were to visit on a Sunday (and we hope that you will), you would hear the Bible read, hymns sung, prayers offered, and Scripture preached – all in about an hour and a half. You would be greeted by members young and old, married and single, rich and poor, who may seem to have little in common. Our members range from ages 18-103 and are from all ends of the earth – Singapore, the Philippines, Bolivia, Cambodia, China, Korea, Brazil, Germany, Canada, and the United States. What binds our members together is a love for Jesus and a desire to grow in knowledge and love of him. For more information about Arlington Baptist, please visit our website at www.arlingtonbaptist.com or call the church office at 703-979-7344.



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10 tips to whip your home into shape and wow potential buyers:

Improve your landscaping. Curb appeal is crucial to a good first impression, so make sure your home's lawn is immaculate. Mow the lawn, prune the bushes, weed the garden and plant flowers.

Clean the outside. A sloppy exterior will make buyers think you've slacked off on interior maintenance as well. Be sure to clean the gutters and pressure wash your home's siding.

Make repairs. In a buyer's market, you want your home to be in the best condition possible. Take care of major defects like broken windows or a leaky roof that could discourage buyers.

Make the front door inviting. A fresh coat of paint, especially in a color that contrasts with the home, will make the front door stand out. Replace faded house numbers so buyers can see them from the curb.

Buy a new welcome mat. Let buyers know they're invited into your home.

Remove clutter and depersonalize. Buyers want to envision their belongings in your home. Clean up by renting a storage unit for knickknacks, photos, extra furniture and other personal items.

Organize closets and drawers. Messy closets give the appearance that your home doesn't have enough storage space.

Make every surface shine. From ceiling fans to floors and everything in between, clean your home until it sparkles.

Take color down a notch. You might like your lime-green bedroom, but it may sour buyers. Paint your walls a neutral color that will appeal to a wide range of buyers.

Eliminate bad odors. Hide the litter box and spray air neutralizer throughout your home. When showing the home, fill it with inviting smells by putting out fresh flowers and baking a batch of cookies.



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ALCOVA HEIGHTS: 2016 YEAR END REVIEW



BUYING OR SELLING YOUR HOME?

Having a great communicator on your side is essential. Let's chat for a few minutes and explore the possibilities. Your money will go further. Isn't that what you deserve?

HOME PRICE

Although the average re-sale home price in Alcova Heights has decreased since 2015...

\$690,400

...the average performance statistics for Alcova Heights has improved!



-55%

Days On Market



+0.2%

% of Original List Price

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Arlington County Sales Update.

2016 was a year of stability and light growth for Arlington real estate with 2,933 total transactions and \$1.87 billion in total sales volume. The average net sold price for all housing was \$636,839, and the median average price for a single-family home averaged \$912,000 in the last 12 months. Arlington saw a price increase of .15%, while maintaining its 2015 market pace of an average of 49 days on market per sale.

Alcova Heights Sales Update. 16 properties closed in Alcova Heights in 2016 per MRIS data. The average list price was \$734,924 and average sold price was \$714,125, with an average of 39 days on the market.

Mortgage Financing Update. Since the election - rates are up over .5%. Current 30 yr. fixed rates are at 4.125% for conforming loans (up to \$424,100) 4.25% for both super conforming (up to \$636,150) and Jumbo loans as well.

FHA/VA rates are 3.625% (conforming loans) and 3.75% for higher amounts. One of my preferred lenders is now offering down payment protection for the full amount of the homebuyer's down payment, in the event of a loss when you sell in a down market. For details feel free to contact me.

Predictions for 2017. There will be more first-time buyers entering the market, but they will face new challenges. When inventory (supply) is thin and demand is unchanged, prices typically rise. It is expected that the inventory supply will not increase, and affordability will still be a challenge in major markets. Mortgage rates are likely to increase throughout 2017. In places where affordability is already an issue, seeing these small bumps will have a slight dampening effect, primarily for first-time homebuyers or lower income folks.

Find out your home's value instantly at: **ArlingtonVAHouseValue.com**



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